Downtown Walk

Use this map for all “D” sites

T = MBTA stop

M = historic marker
Downtown Walk

“The Search for Equal Rights”

The Downtown Walk begins at the State House, and goes past many of Boston’s earliest historic sites, ending at Franklin and Washington streets, a block below Tremont Street and the Boston Common. The walk features women across the centuries, with a focus on the eighteenth century through the mid-nineteenth century. It includes women who wrote poetry, essays, and plays and spoke out publicly before members of the Massachusetts State Legislature and in Boston's halls and churches for the abolition of slavery, woman suffrage, and African American and Native American rights. Boston's downtown area is home to its business and financial institutions, as well as to a major shopping area and the Quincy Market at Faneuil Hall.

Time: 2 hours

Begins: Massachusetts State House

Directions: Facing the State House, go left to the outside of the West Wing.

D1: Anne Hutchinson Statue
State House, Front of West Wing

Anne Hutchinson (1591-1643) was banished from Boston in the first decade of settlement because her religious views were different from those of the ruling ministers. Believing that both men and women could receive grace only from God, she accused the ministers of preaching that “good works” signified holiness. Hutchinson attracted women to prayer meetings she held in her home in part because her beliefs put women’s souls on an equal footing with men’s souls. She was a respected midwife and wife of an established merchant, but was banished in 1638 for heresy (see also D19). This statue, erected in 1922 as a gift of the Anne Hutchinson Memorial Association and the State Federation of Women’s Clubs, was sculpted by Cyrus E. Dallin.

“Now if you do condemn me for speaking what in my conscience I know to be the truth I must commit myself unto the Lord....”
—Anne Hutchinson

D2: Mary Dyer Statue
State House, Front of East Wing

Mary Dyer (d. 1660) was a Quaker whose doctrine of Inner Light was similar to
Hutchinson’s salvation by grace received directly from God. At the time, practice of the Quaker religion was not allowed in Massachusetts. She witnessed for religious freedom in Boston three times. Twice she was banished, but the third time she was hanged on Boston Common. Dyer was a friend of Anne Hutchinson and walked out of church beside her following Hutchinson’s excommunication. This statue, erected in 1959 from a descendant’s bequest, was sculpted by Sylvia Shaw Judson (see photo on page 102).

D3: “Hear Us” — State House Women’s Leadership Project
State House, second floor south, outside Doric Hall
In 1996, the Massachusetts legislature recognized that the State House art collection included only a handful of images of women. They recommended that a new work of art be created to honor the contributions of women to public life in Massachusetts. Now permanently installed on a large wall just outside Doric Hall, the work depicts six women selected by an advisory committee. Dorothea Dix (1802-87) (see D5); Lucy Stone (1818-93) (see D7, BBW23); Sarah Parker Remond (1814-94) (see D14); Josephine St. Pierre Ruffin (1842-1924) (see B17); Mary Kenney O’Sullivan (1864-1943) (see C12); and Florence Luscomb (1887-1985) (see BBE17) were chosen to represent all the women who dedicated themselves to improving life in the Commonwealth. The two-toned marble panels designed by artists Sheila Levrant de Bretteville and Susan Sellers include words written by the women etched on the stone and bronze busts cast from period photographs. Historical sources were used to reveal the personal and political challenges these women faced in their struggles to bring about social change.

D4: Nurses Hall
State House, Second Floor
The statue of a Civil War nurse administering aid to a wounded soldier was a gift of the Massachusetts Daughters of Veterans in 1914. They called the nurses “Angels of Mercy and Life Amid Scenes of Conflict and Death.” Louisa May Alcott (1832-88), author of Little Women, served as a Civil War nurse in Georgetown, D.C., until she contracted typhoid fever. She wrote about her experiences in Hospital Sketches (see B6, SE19). On the facing balcony wall is a painting honoring mothers of war by Boston artist Edward Brodney. His mother, Sarah Brodney, was the model for the central figure.

Two plaques behind the nurse’s statue honor two individual wartime nurses: Clara Barton (1821-1912) and Second Lt. Frances Sanger (1913-44). Born in North Oxford, Massachusetts, Clara Barton is best known as the founder of the American Red Cross in 1881. During the Civil War, she administered so much direct aid and provided so many supplies that she became known as the “Angel of the Battlefield.” She established the first office to coordinate information on
missing soldiers. Under her leadership from 1881-1904, the Red Cross provided relief in twenty-one disasters in addition to the Spanish-American War.

Frances Sanger was the first American nurse in the European Theater to be killed in combat during World War II. A U.S. Army nurse with the 45th field hospital, she landed in Normandy with the first hospital platoon on June 9, 1944. She is also remembered for the eloquence of a letter she wrote to the Stars and Stripes the day before she died praising the rank and file American GI. At age seven, Sanger emigrated with her family to the U.S. from Lodz, Poland. They settled in the South End where she worked with her father peddling fruits and vegetables while attending school. She graduated from Boston’s High School of Practical Arts and the Boston City Hospital School of Nursing.

D5: Angelina and Sarah Grimké; Dorothea Dix — House Chamber and Committee Rooms
State House, Third Floor
Women were considered citizens with the right to petition long before they gained the right to vote in 1920. Abolitionist Angelina Grimké (1805-79), who was raised by a slave-holding family in the South, spoke out against slavery on a tour of New England with her sister Sarah in 1837. In 1838, she presented a women’s anti-slavery petition with 20,000 signatures to a committee of the state legislature and became the first woman to publicly address the legislature. In 1843, after an eighteen-month survey of jails and poorhouses in Massachusetts, Dorothea Dix (1802-87) prepared a Memorial for the state legislature. “I come to place before the legislature of Massachusetts the condition of the miserable, the desolate, the outcast,” Dix began, as she charged extreme cruelty in the treatment of the mentally ill. The state appropriated funds to improve one facility and she continued her investigations in many other states. During the Civil War, Dix was the superintendent of army nurses for the Union.

Directions: At the bottom of the State House steps, face Park Street and turn left on Beacon Street.

D6: The Boston Athenæum
10 1/2 Beacon Street
Many women played a role in the history of The Boston Athenæum, a library supported by memberships and thought to be the oldest library in America. Poet and celebrity Amy Lowell (1874-1925) was the first woman to be appointed to the Board of Directors. As a girl, Lowell had free run of the Athenæum. In 1903 when the trustees threatened to tear down the building, Amy Lowell led the protest. Her poetry flourished when, during a sojourn in Paris, she discovered French symbolism as expressed in the branch of poetry called “Imagism.” She edited works of poetry, as well as bringing out collections of her own work.

The Athenæum’s art collection includes: Puck and Owl, a sculpture by Harriet Hosmer (1830-1908) (see N11);
a portrait of **Hannah Adams** (1755-1831), a scholar and author who was the first woman to be given reading privileges at the library; and a portrait by John Singer Sargent of **Annie Adams Fields** (1834-1915). Fields was a noted writer, poet, and social philanthropist, who conducted a literary salon (see B18).

거리 7: **Woman’s Journal** and **9 to 5 Office Workers’ Union**
5 Park Street
The offices of the *Woman’s Journal*, the newspaper published by the American Woman Suffrage Association, and the New England Women’s Club, one of the first clubs for women in the country, were in another building on this site. Edited by **Lucy Stone** (1818-93), the *Journal* chose office space as close to the seat of power—the State House—as possible. Stone petitioned annually for woman suffrage. In 1879 she testified: “In this very State House, how often have women looked down from the gallery while our lawmakers voted down our rights, and heard them say, ‘Half an hour is time enough to waste on it,’...[and then] turn eagerly to consider such a question as what shall be the size of a barrel of cranberries...[taking] plenty of time to consider that.” Stone had been one of the first Massachusetts women to receive a college degree when she graduated from Oberlin College in 1847. When she married Henry Blackwell she became the first married woman to officially keep her maiden name, leading to the late nineteenth-century coining of the term “a Lucy Stoner” to mean a woman who stood up for her rights. Lucy Stone is one of three women chosen to be portrayed in the Boston Women’s Memorial (see BBW23) and one of six to be memorialized in the State House (see D3).

**Alice Stone Blackwell** (1857-1950), Stone’s daughter, edited the *Journal* in a building on Copley Square (see BBW5) for twenty-five years.
years until suffrage was granted in 1920. In 1973, a trade union for women office workers named 9 to 5 held its first monthly meetings in this building now owned by the Paulist Fathers. A member decided to organize after her boss walked into the office and said, “Well, I guess there’s no one here.” 9 to 5 now meets at 145 Tremont Street and shares space with Local 925 of the Services Employees Union.

Directions: Continue down Park Street. Cross Tremont Street to Hamilton Place. D8: Dress Reform Parlors and Milliners Hamilton Place The short streets running between Tremont and Washington Streets—including Hamilton Place, Winter Street, and Temple Place—contained shops for women in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Many women were successful proprietors of dressmaking and millinery shops, including Irish-born Ellen Hartnett, who rose from being a millinery worker in 1860 to a shop owner with capital twenty-five years later. In order to secure the best class of customers, some dressmakers, like Josephine McCluskey, took on new names—she became “Miss Delavenue.” The area also supported Dress Reform Parlors in the 1880s, where women could be freed from the restrictive fashions of the day. They could purchase or buy patterns for such items as the “emancipation waist.”

Directions: Return to Tremont Street and cross it again.

D9: Abiah Franklin and “Mother Goose” — Granary Burying Ground Abiah Franklin (1667-1752), mother of Benjamin Franklin, was honored by her famous son when he erected the central high granite obelisk in memory of his parents. She raised 13 children, including Benjamin and Jane Franklin Mecom (see D22) and was called “a discreet and virtuous woman.” Tradition states that Elizabeth Foster Vergoose, “If we ask ourselves Why is the subject of dress of such consequence? I think the answer will follow, Because a comparatively unimportant and external thing has come to stand as of the very first importance to the great majority of women...It was...painful to hear a devout woman, of years and wide experience say, ‘I believe that the majority of women, if entering heaven to-day, would ask, not ‘Where is my Lord?’ but ‘What do they wear there?’”

—Abby May

“We, the people of the United States. Which ‘We the people? The women were not included.” —Lucy Stone

Lucy Stone
known as “Mother Goose,” is buried here. Widowed, she lived with her eldest daughter and entertained her grandchildren with nursery rhymes. Her son-in-law, printer Thomas Fleet, reportedly published them as Songs for the Nursery or Mother Goose’s Melodies.

Directions: Look across the street.

D10: Edmonia Lewis Studio
Corner of Bromfield and Tremont Streets (now Suffolk University Law School)
The studio of Edmonia Lewis (1845-ca. 1909), a member of the colony of women sculptors in Rome gathering around Charlotte Cushman (1816-76) in the mid-nineteenth century (see N11), was located in a former building at this site from 1863-65. As a child, Lewis, who had both African American and Chippewa ancestry, lived with her Chippewa mother’s people. Although she was born free, her favorite subject for her sculpture was freedom from slavery, demonstrated in Forever Free, a sculpture depicting a man and woman breaking their chains, made as a tribute to abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison. It is now on display at the Howard University Gallery of Art. Her most popular work was a bust of Colonel Robert Gould Shaw, the white commander of the African American 54th Massachusetts Infantry during the Civil War. Lewis’s identification with her Chippewa heritage caused her also to revere and create a bust of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, author of the poem, Hiawatha. The sculpture is now owned by the Fogg Art Museum at Harvard University.

Directions: Continue along Tremont Street.

D11: Tremont Temple
Women Lecturers
88 Tremont Street
In an earlier building on this site, nineteenth century women held many meetings urging the abolition of slavery, adoption of woman suffrage, and temperance reform. Mary Rice Livermore (1820-1905) was a prominent national lecturer after the Civil War who often spoke at Tremont Temple. Her first speech there was in 1869 when her subject was woman suffrage. Her Boston speeches in 1874 led to the founding of the Massachusetts Women’s Christian Temperance Union for which she served as president for ten years. Livermore was the first editor of the Woman’s Journal. She later held the office of president of the American Woman Suffrage Association and was first president of the Association for the Advancement of Women.

“This is woman’s hour, with all its sweet amenities and its moral and religious reforms.”
—Mary Baker Eddy

Mary Baker Eddy
Here, in March 1885, Mary Baker Eddy (1821-1910), founder of the Church of Christ, Scientist, was given ten minutes to respond to a barrage of criticism from members of the Boston clergy. Her ideas about God as father-mother and of man and woman as co-equals—both created in God’s image—angered the ministers of the time. Her book, *Science and Health*, was a best seller. In the years following her talk, Eddy emerged as one of the most important women reformers of her day, pioneering in the field of mind-body medicine. Soon after she spoke in Tremont Temple, she wrote, “Let it not be heard in Boston that woman...has no rights which man is bound to respect....This is woman’s hour, with all its sweet amenities and its moral and religious reforms” (see also SE14).

Directions: Continue along Tremont Street. Turn right on School Street.

D12: Boston School Committeewomen

*Old City Hall, 45 School Street*

Women were elected to the Boston School Committee before they could vote. In 1875, after a drive by the New England Women’s Club, six women took their seats on the Boston School Committee elected by Boston men. Although the Committee was reduced from 116 to 24 members the following year, four women were reelected including Lucretia Crocker (1829-86) (see SE8), who later became the first woman supervisor in the Boston Public Schools, and Abby May (1829-88). May succeeded in starting a separate Latin School for girls, but it was not until 1972 that the two Latin schools became co-educational. When May was defeated for reelection, women all over Massachusetts petitioned the legislature and won the right to vote for school board members, starting in 1879 (see also D25).

Julia Harrington Duff (1859-1932) of Charlestown, a former Boston School teacher, was the first Irish-American woman to be elected to the Boston School Committee in 1900. Her rallying cry, “Boston schools for Boston girls,” expressed her belief that Yankee teachers from outside the city were being hired in preference to the young Catholic women graduates of Boston’s Normal School. Boston women teachers pressed for their rights. Among the women challenging the 1880s School Committee regulation that women resign upon marriage were Grace Lonergan Lorch (1903-74) and Suzanne Revaleon Green. Green’s husband, a lawyer, succeeded in having his wife and two other married teachers reinstated to their teaching positions. The regulation remained on the books, however, until 1953 when a state law required its removal.

Directions: Return to and cross Tremont Street. Turn right. Go up the stairs through Center Plaza to Pemberton Square. On your left is D13.
D13: Women Judges
Municipal Court House, Pemberton Square

Jennie Loitman Barron (1891-1969) became the state’s first full-time woman judge in 1934. She served for thirty years, twenty in the Boston Municipal Court and ten in the Superior Court. As a lawyer representing the League of Women Voters, she successfully argued for women’s service on juries. Before she became a judge, Barron served on the Boston School Committee in the late 1920s, where she focused attention on substandard school conditions.

Directions: Look to the right of the Court House for the former location of the Howard Athenæum.

D14: Sarah Parker Remond and the Howard Athenæum
Pemberton Square

Sarah Parker Remond, the granddaughter of a free black who fought in the Revolutionary War, committed her first act of public resistance at the Howard Athenæum. In 1853, Remond, who lived in Salem, had purchased tickets by mail for a performance at the Howard. When she arrived, the theater would not seat her in the seats she had paid for but, instead, made her sit in the segregated gallery. She refused, departed, and later sued the theater, winning $500 in damages. Remond went on to become an international anti-slavery lecturer (see also D3).

The Howard Athenæum was opened in 1846 with the first cushioned theater seats in Boston. It was a fashionable theater, playing opera and drama until 1870 when it turned to vaudeville. The building was demolished in 1962.

Directions: Walk down the steps through Center Plaza to Cambridge Street. Cross to City Hall Plaza.

D15: Abigail Adams, Mercy Otis Warren, and Brattle Square
City Hall Plaza, Cambridge Street

The Boston City Hall Plaza covers the same ground as the eighteenth century Brattle Square. From 1768 to 1771, Abigail Adams (1744-1817) lived in two locations in and near Brattle Square with her husband, attorney John Adams, and their family. It was a period of increasing family responsibilities for her. Her five children were born between 1765 and 1772. The family lived there during the Boston Massacre, which took place nearby—just outside the
Old State House—in 1770. After John Adams successfully defended the British soldiers involved in the incident, his health declined. The family moved back to their farm in Braintree (now Quincy) the following year, but returned to Boston in 1772. They were in Boston during the Boston Tea Party in 1773, but by 1774 the Adamses had moved back to the farm permanently because John began traveling for the new Republic—first as a delegate to the Continental Congress in Philadelphia.

Abigail Adams became well known as a critical thinker and correspondent with her husband, who was away from the farm for much of the next ten years. She managed the farm, their large family, and their financial affairs. Abigail Adams is one of three women chosen to be portrayed in the Boston Women’s Memorial (see BBW23).

Among Abigail Adams’s correspondents was Mercy Otis Warren (1728-1814), probably the first published women historian in the U.S. In 1805, she published a three-volume history of the American Revolution. She also published several satirical plays.

Directions: Walk across City Hall Plaza Go down the steps, cross Congress Street to Faneuil Hall. Turn left. Cross North Street into Carmen Park, between Congress and Union Streets.

D16: Holocaust Memorial
Carmen Park
Dozens of prominent Boston women were involved in planning and funding the New England Holocaust Memorial, some of them survivors of Nazi concentration camps who have found new lives in Boston. The Memorial was dedicated in October 1995 to foster the memory of the Holocaust.
of, and reflection on, one of the great tragedies of modern times. The Memorial features six luminous glass towers etched with six million numbers to remind visitors of those who perished during the Holocaust, or Shoah, from 1933-45. In total, the Memorial honors all eleven million people who perished because of their race, religion, nationality, physical disability or sexual preference, as well as those who courageously aided death camp survivors. The Memorial’s dedication includes the words, “...know that wherever prejudice, discrimination and victimization are tolerated, evil like the Holocaust can happen again.”

Directions: Return to Faneuil Hall. Note the statue of patriot Sam Adams by sculptor Anne Whitney (see B15).

D17: Protest Meetings and Faneuil Hall

Quincy Market

Faneuil Hall and the adjoining Quincy Market are the historic locations of Boston’s great women’s fairs and protest meetings. The Anti-Slavery Bazaars, sponsored by the Female Anti-Slavery Societies, were held there in the 1830s and 1840s. In September 1840, women held a seven-day fair to raise money to complete the building of the Bunker Hill monument. Inspired by Sarah Josepha Hale (1820-79), the women raised $30,000 (see N7). Among the women’s suffrage meetings held in Faneuil Hall was a New England Woman’s Tea Party, sponsored on the centennial of the Boston Tea Party by the New England Woman Suffrage Association. They invited the public to join them in the celebration, noting that women were still subject to “taxation without representation.” In an alcove behind the stage, note the bust of Lucy Stone, a main speaker at the Tea Party (see D7, BBW23).

Suzette “Bright Eyes” LaFleshe (1854-1903), an Omaha Indian, inspired the Indian Rights Movement when she spoke in Faneuil Hall in December 1879. LaFlesche, wearing native dress and a bear-claw necklace, protested the reservation system: “Did our Creator...intend that men created in his own image should be ruled over by another set of his creatures?” After hearing Bright Eyes speak in Boston, many Boston women became her supporters. Helen Hunt Jackson (1830-85) was inspired by her speech to write A Century of Dishonor, a book that cited injustices to the Indian peoples, and works of fiction about Native Americans including Ramona.

Working women saw Faneuil Hall as a place for a forum for their demands. In 1903, the Women’s Trade Union League was founded in Faneuil Hall (see C16). Massachusetts nurses also chose the hall to rally for professional status in 1903 when they founded the Massachusetts Nurses Association. Among the organizers was Lucy Lincoln Drown (1847-1934), superintendent of nurses at Boston City Hospital from 1885 to 1910. In 1919, the call for the women telephone operators’ strike brought two thousand angry women to the hall (see C4).
Directions: Continue up Congress Street. Turn right on State Street noting the Old State House (which is managed by The Bostonian Society) and the National Park Service Visitor Center. Turn left on Washington Street.

Elizabeth Murray

D18: Elizabeth Murray, Corn Hill and Queen Street (now, roughly, Court and Washington Streets)
Born in Scotland, Elizabeth Murray (1726-85) came to Boston in 1749. At age twenty-three she established a business selling imported cloth and dry goods from Great Britain. She proved to be such a resourceful business woman that she soon earned enough money to be entirely self-sufficient—a rare achievement for a colonial woman. Although she married three times, Murray remained childless. Still, she oversaw the education and upbringing of her nieces, kindling in them a spirit of self-reliance and self-esteem. She helped them and other needy women set up shops of their own. Murray once wrote to a friend, “I’d rather [be] a useful member of society than all of the fine delicate creatures of the age.”

—Illustration of Elizabeth Murray

D19: Old Corner Bookstore
Corner of School and Washington Streets
Anne Hutchinson lived in a house on this site in the mid 1630s across from Governor John Winthrop. It was here that she conducted women’s prayer meetings (see D1). In the mid-nineteenth century, the present building, known as the Old Corner Bookstore, housed the publishing firm of Ticknor and Fields. Annie Adams Fields (1834-1915), wife of publisher James T. Fields, conducted a literary salon for authors in the Fields’ home on Charles Street (see B18).

D20: Irish Famine Memorial and Annie Sullivan
Corner of School and Washington Streets
The Irish Famine Memorial was dedicated in 1998 to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Irish potato famine. It honors the arrival of Irish immigrants to Boston and their contributions to the city. Created by sculptor Robert Shure, the sculptures depict a starving family in Ireland begging for help, and one arriving in America.

Directions: Continue on Washington Street. A plaque in Spring Lane, on the left, marks the site of the home of Mary Chilton Winslow (d.1679), a Mayflower passenger in 1620.

Irish Famine Memorial, detail
Among the Irish women honored by the Boston Women’s Heritage Trail is Annie Sullivan Macy (1866-1936), known as the gifted teacher of Helen Keller (1880-1968). Born to poor Irish immigrants to Massachusetts, Sullivan progressively became blind. After the death of her mother and her father’s abandonment, she entered an orphanage. In 1880, a supervisor placed her in the Perkins School for the Blind in South Boston. Two operations improved her eyesight enough so she could read, and Sullivan graduated as valedictorian of her class. She became the teacher of Helen Keller, who came from an advantaged family but could not hear, see, or speak. Sullivan devoted her life to Keller, who became a national celebrity, and saw Keller through her education and early career.

D21: Old South Meeting House and Phillis Wheatley
310 Washington Street
When Old South, the site of mass protest meetings in Revolutionary Boston, was slated for demolition a hundred years later, a group of women bought the building (but not the land) to protect it. Philanthropist Mary Tileston Hemenway (1820-94) then contributed more than half the sum needed to preserve it, becoming an early leader in historic preservation.

Phillis Wheatley (ca. 1753-84), the first African American poet to be published in book form, was a member of Old South. While still a child, she was purchased as a slave by the Wheatley family. Her poetry reflects her love of freedom: “Should you...wonder from whence my love of Freedom sprung...I, young in life, was snatched from Afric’s fancy’d happy seat...such, such my case. And can I then but pray Others may never feel tyrannic sway?” Phillis Wheatley is one of three women chosen to be portrayed in the Boston Women’s Memorial (see BBW23). An exhibit depicting her life is permanently displayed here. For the site marking her landing place, see C6.

“Poetry is the voice through which I speak to the world. I was taken from my parents ...at the age of seven, my only memory being one of my mother pouring out water before the sun rose. That was in 1761, when I was transported as a slave to Boston....”
—Phillis Wheatley

Directions: Turn left on Milk Street.
D22: Birthplace of Jane Franklin Mecom
(and Benjamin Franklin), 17 Milk Street

Jane Franklin Mecom (1712-94), Benjamin Franklin’s sister and favorite family correspondent, survived the trials of raising nine children and many grandchildren in eighteenth-century Boston. After Mecom’s husband died in 1765, she opened a boarding house near the Old State House, where legislators stayed frequently and kept her informed about local and national political issues. At the age of seventy-six she wrote: “I have a good clean House to live in...I go to bed Early lye warm & comfortable Rise Early to a good Fire have my Brakfast directly and Eate it with a good Apetite and then read or Work...we live frugaly Bake all our own Bread...a Friend sitts and chats a little in the Evening....”

Directions: Continue down Milk Street to Federal Street. Turn right.

D23: Susanna Rowson and Federal Street Theatre
Federal Street

Susanna Haswell Rowson (1760-1824), a playwright and an actress at the Federal Street Theatre, was the author of the first American best-selling novel, Charlotte Temple, A Tale of Truth. Rowson arrived in America when she was six, but her father was a Loyalist and during the Revolution they returned to England. Not long after her marriage to William Rowson, Susanna returned to America and settled in Boston where they both acted at the Federal Street Theatre. For the five years following 1796, she performed 129 different parts in 126 productions, many of which she wrote herself. Her next venture was to set up a Young Ladies Academy in 1797 near the Theatre. Rowson moved the school out of Boston but later returned. Her academy was one of the first to offer girls education above the elementary level and included instruction in music and public speaking.

Another woman playwright whose plays were performed at the Federal Street Theatre in 1795 and 1796 was Judith Sargent Murray (see D25). Her satirical plays, The Medium or Happy Tea-Party
(later renamed *The Medium, or Virtue Triumphant*) and *The Traveller Returned*, addressed class structure and gender roles in the New Republic.

Public speakers lecturing at the Federal Street Theatre included Deborah Sampson (1760-1827), considered to be America's first female soldier. In 1802, Sampson electrified the crowd as she told her story of fighting in the Revolutionary War for eighteen months disguised as a man named Robert Shurtleff.

Directions: Continue to the corner of Federal and Franklin Streets.

“A piercing voice of grief and wrong,
Goes upward from the groaning earth!
Oh true and holy Lord! how long?
In majesty and might come forth!”
—Maria Weston Chapman, from *Songs of the Free*

**D24: Federal Street Church**

100 Federal Street

Among the more well-known Boston women who attended William Ellery Channing’s Federal Street Church were abolitionists Maria Weston Chapman (1806-85) and Eliza Lee Cabot Follen. Chapman, a founder of the Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society, was a supporter of abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison, publisher of the famed abolitionist newspaper *The Liberator*. An inspired organizer and fundraiser, Chapman ran twenty-two yearly anti-slavery fairs in Boston beginning in 1834. One of her colleagues in this venture was Lydia Maria Child (1802-80) whose 1833 publication, *An Appeal in Behalf of that Class of Americans called Africans*, was the first book to advocate an immediate end to slavery. Chapman's fairs became a model for women in other parts of the country to raise money for the abolitionist cause. Chapman also published several important anti-slavery tracts including *How Can I Help Abolish Slavery?* and *Right and Wrong in Massachusetts*. With Garrison, Maria Chapman supported women's full participation in abolitionist work—including public speaking, which had been condemned in a pastoral letter from the Congregational ministers of Massachusetts as being outside women's God-ordained sphere. In 1840, Chapman was elected to the executive committee of the American Anti-Slavery Society.

Eliza Lee Cabot Follen (1787-1860) was best known for her anti-slavery writings including *Anti-Slavery Hymns and Songs* and *A Letter to Mothers in Free States*. In *A Letter*, Follen wrote, “...what can women,—what can we mothers do?... you can do everything; I repeat, you can abolish slavery. Let every mother take the subject to heart, as one in which she has a personal concern. In the silence of the night, let her listen to the slave-mothers crying to her for help....” Much of Follen’s writing was designed for children, including songs, poems, and stories that carried a moral lesson.

Directions: Turn right up Franklin Street to Arch Street.
D25: Franklin Place and Home of Judith Sargent Murray

Franklin and Arch Streets

The Tontine Crescent was a fashionable place to live in late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century Boston. The long row of elegant townhouses, designed by Boston architect Charles Bulfinch, was built in 1793 and named Franklin Place after Benjamin Franklin. With the opening of the Back Bay for settlement, they declined in fashion and were demolished in 1872 after the Great Fire. Franklin Street still retains the curve of the buildings.

Among the notable women who lived there was Judith Sargent Murray (1751-1820), a native of Gloucester, who moved with her husband, John Murray, to No. 5 Franklin Place in 1794 (see N9). Judith Sargent Murray was already a successful writer, publishing a regular column (“The Gleaner”) in the Massachusetts Magazine, a new literary monthly. Using a male persona, Judith expressed her opinions on female equality, education, federalism, and republicanism. She wrote that not only should a woman be educated to be “the sensible and informed” companion of men, but she should also be equipped to earn her own living. Murray saw the many new female academies as inaugurating “a new era in female history.” In 1798, she published her “Gleaner” essays in a book she also called The Gleaner, selling it to a list of subscribers including John Adams and George Washington. The Gleaner became a minor classic, and Murray became the first woman in America to self-publish. She was also a poet, publishing in various Boston periodicals under the pen names “Honora Martesia” and “Constantia.” An avid letter writer, the copies of letters Murray wrote from 1765-1818 (ages 14-67) were discovered in 1984, and offer a new eyewitness account of early American history.

“[The idea of the incapability of women] is...totally inadmissible....To argue against facts, is indeed contending with both wind and tide; and, borne down by accumulating examples, conviction of the utility of the present plans will pervade the public mind, and not a dissenting voice will be heard.”

—Judith Sargent Murray

Abby May (1829-88), also an advocate for women’s rights, lived at 5 Franklin Place with her family as a young woman. Among her many achievements, May succeeded in starting a separate Latin School for girls (see D12) and served as one of the first women on the Boston School Committee.

Directions: Continue up Franklin Street to Washington Street. If you turn left on Washington Street to West Street, you can join the Chinatown loop of the Boston Women’s Heritage Trail. If you turn left on Washington Street and right on Winter Street, you will arrive at the Boston Common near Park Street below the State House, where you started the Downtown Walk.